

THE CONCEPT OF WAR AND PEACE IN THE
QUR'ĀN:
AN ANALYTICAL STUDY

BY

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ABSTRACT

Fighting in the path of Allah (swt) is one of the most misinterpreted topics in Islām by non-Muslims. It has been described as horrific and is given a negative image. This thesis attempts to study and analyse the concept of war and peace in the Qur'ān. In order to understand the concept of war in the Qur'ān, armed jihād should be discussed. It shows that in the broader sense, jihād does not always mean fighting. In its Qur'ānic usage, especially in the early Makkan revelation, the emphasis is mainly on the peaceful meaning of jihād. However, this should not, on the other hand, preclude the military meaning of jihād. A campaign against the aggression of the enemy of Islām requires the use of force. This study uncovers that it is in this context that war in Islām is projected as an instrument for realization of peace and justice and at the same time a tool for checking and eliminating lawlessness, oppression and exploitation. A further light is thrown on the armed struggle in the Qur'ān in order to show that Islām does not absolutely prohibit fighting; instead, it considers it as an on-going process on condition that Muslims must know exactly when to resort to armed struggle. War may become necessary for self-defence and to stop evil from triumphing in a way that would corrupt the earth. The Qur'ān gives Muslims divine permission to carry out armed struggle after every civilized means is exhausted. Jihād in Madīnah verses means "fighting" in the path of Allah (swt) by sacrificing your life and property. This study also aims to show that war in Islām does not mean only a defensive war in the sense that you should wait until you are attacked, for this would be a misinterpretation of the essential principles of armed struggle in Islām. A discussion on the issue of peace follows. The study analyses the concept of peace in the Qur'ān. It reveals that Islām is a religion of peace. This fact is borne by both Islāmic teachings and the very name of Islām. The word 'Islām' itself is derived from the root *slm*, which is the root letter for peace. But while Islām preaches peace and insists on the due fulfillment of obligations towards friends and foes alike, it recognizes realistically that there are situations when war may become inevitable. In dealing with such situations, it lays down meticulously the laws, conditions and limitations under which recourse to war is permitted. The Qur'ān teaches Muslims that once the hostility of the enemy ceases, the Muslims must stop fighting and they should respond immediately and positively to the first signs of peace offered by the enemy. Finally, this study discusses the issue of conflict resolution from an Islāmic perspective. It discloses the Qur'ānic principles for settling disputes between Muslims and non-Muslims and among Muslims as well. Further analysis also shows that the Qur'ān discourages unnecessary conflicts, and heaps utter condemnation on those who bring destruction and violence. This research seeks to prove that the Qur'ānic approach to conflict resolution is universal and relevant to any time and space. This study concludes by bringing to light the obstacles and the failure of implementing non-Islāmic conflict resolution in an Islāmic society. Qur'ānic verses that discuss Jihād, war and peace form the core of this thesis. The translation of the relevant verses, commentaries and the views of Muslim scholars known as *mufasssīrūn* are also presented in this research. This study has followed a descriptive and analytical approach both in dealing with the primary and secondary data pertaining to the concept of war and peace in the Qur'ān.

خلاصة البحث

يعد موضوع القتال في سبيل الله من المواضيع التي قام أعداء الإسلام بتشويهها وإساءة تفسيرها، فتم إضفاء وصف مروع له وإظهاره بصورة سلبية. إن هذا البحث يهدف إلى دراسة وتحليل نظرية الحرب والسلم في القرآن. ولكي نفهم مفهوم الحرب في القرآن، ينبغي مناقشة الجهاد المسلح، وإبراز أن معنى الجهاد على وجه العموم أوسع مدى وتناولاً من القتال فقط، وأنه يعني بذل الجهد في الحرب وفي غيرها، وترمي هذه الدراسة أيضاً إلى توضيح أن الجهاد في الآيات المكية يدل على معنى الجهاد بالكلمة، وإقامة الحجة والبراهين، وبيان العقيدة الصحيحة، ولكن هذا لا يعني إهمال الجهاد المسلح، بل إن مواجهة العدو وردّ عدوانه لا يتمّ إلا باستخدام القوة. ومن هنا، يكون الجهاد وسيلة لإزالة الظلم وتحقيق السلام. وفي هذا إشارة إلى أن الإسلام لا يمنع القتال بل يجعله واجباً دينياً مستمراً يقوم به المسلمون لإعلاء كلمة الله. ولهذا، أذن للمسلمين حمل السلاح للدفاع عن أنفسهم ودرءاً للفتنة. وهذه إشارة إلى معنى الجهاد في الآيات المدنية التي تهدف إلى بذل الجهد بالقتال في سبيل الله عزّ وجلّ بالنفس والمال. وأوضحت الدراسة أن الحرب في الإسلام ليست دفاعية فقط، وإنما تكون هجومية أيضاً، لصدّ أي عدوان مُحتمل. ويشمل البحث كذلك دراسة مفهوم السلام في القرآن الكريم موضحاً أن الإسلام هو دين السلام والتسامح، بل إن تسميته مشتقة من كلمة "السلم" وهو الأمن. ومع كل هذا، فإن هناك حالات تكون الحرب فيها أمراً ضرورياً لا مناص منه. وبهذا، فقد عني البحث بذكر قواعد الحروب المشروعة، وتنظيم مبادئ القتال، أما إذا جنح العدو للسلم دون أي لبس وخداع، فإن وَقْف الحرب وإبرام صلح معهم يكون أمراً مشروعاً. وقد اختتمت الدراسة بمعالجة موضوع حل النزاعات مع توضيح أساليب القرآن في إنهاء الصراعات مؤكداً على أن هذه الأساليب عالمية ومناسبة في كل زمان ومكان. كما بينت الدراسة فشل تطبيق القوانين الوضعية في حل النزاعات في المجتمعات المسلمة. وتعد الآيات القرآنية التي تتحدث عن الجهاد، والقتال، والسلام، المحور الرئيس لهذا البحث. وقد اعتمدت الدراسة على المنهجين الوصفي والتحليلي في التعامل مع الدراسات الأولية والثانوية التي تتحدث عن مفهوم الحرب والسلم في القرآن الكريم.

APPROVAL PAGE

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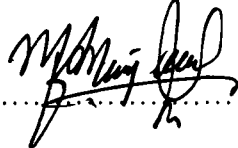
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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own findings and investigations, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references and a bibliography is appended.

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AN ANALYTICAL STUDY**

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(To the memory of my late parents, May Allah Almighty rest their blessed souls in His Divine Mercy, To my wife Anab Abdi Nor, and Abdinur my son, with all my love, To Abdul Rahman and Abdul Razak, my brothers and trusted counselors, To my nephews Mohamed Abdillahi Jama and Liban Abdillahi Jama, To my best and long time colleague Sheikh Bakr Almarbaee, To Lesley Martin, my case officer at the Australian High Commission in KL, To my physicians Dr. Shafeeq Mohammad Lone from IIUM health Centre, Dr. George Isaac, Dr. Riza Razali and Dr. Amarith P. L.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Concept of War and Peace in the Qur'ān: An Overview

According to the Qur'ānic teachings, human beings are the most valuable and noble creatures in the entire universe; they are the ones who are conferred the greatest respect. The Qur'ān says “*That if anyone slew a person-unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land - it would be as if he slew the whole people*” (al Mā'idah: 32). Therefore, to put a life to death without justice means to put all humanity to death.

Historically, many people and nations have every now and then, been at war with one another. Spectacular examples of such strife among man are the two major World Wars. But despite the civilizational advancements in many aspects, modern man is still experiencing fierce conflicts and intense warfare affecting almost the entire world and it appears from the current situation that the war torn nations will for many coming centuries continue to suffer from the aftereffects. Although there are unavoidable circumstances that lead to conflict, war should be seen as the last resort in settling any conflict, and the issue of peace must prevail if societies want to prosper and coexist in harmony. If we define peace as a condition or period in which there is no war between two or more nations and a state of freedom from disorder within a country with the people living in harmony, the concept of war and peace deserves to be addressed as a serious issue of discussion and research.

While Islām does not encourage wars except in some inevitable situations, Muslims rightly argue that peace constitutes a norm in Islām. The Qur'ān seeks to

promote excellent moral values. Peace is one of those values. In fact, the word ‘Islām’ itself is derived from the root *silm*, which is the root letter for peace. Islām signifies surrendering to the Will of Allah (swt) as well as establishing peace.

The Qur’ān encourages Muslims to respond immediately and positively to the signs of peace offered by the enemy. Allah (swt) ordered the early Muslims to seek peace at a time when peace lovers were few and far between. Allah (swt) says in the Qur’ān *“But if the enemy inclines towards peace, do thou (also) incline towards peace, and trust in Allah; for He is the One that heareth and knoweth.”* (al-Anfāl: 61).

On the other hand, it is historically obvious that the early Muslims got the divine permission to carry out armed struggle after every civilized means was exhausted. They were not allowed to resort to violence at the outset of their sufferings and subjugation to persecution and oppression at the hands of their formidable enemy. They were allowed to fight back the enemy only when there was no other way out to deal with the situation. When their enemy ignored their proposal to civilized resolution of the problem, Muslims were only left with the option of self-defense so as to ensure honourable survival¹. The Qur’ān stressed this fact in an explicit manner *“To those against whom war is made, permission is given (to fight) because they are wronged and verily Allah is most powerful for their aid. (They are) those who have been expelled from their homes in defiance of right, (for no cause) except that they say: ‘our Lord is Allah’.”* (al-Haj: 39-40).

“And fight them on until there is no more persecution and religion becomes Allah’s, but if they cease, let there be no hostility except to those who practise oppression”. (al-Baqarah: 193).

¹ ‘Abdurrahmān, Abuhuraira. *The Wisdom of Jihād* (Johor Bahru: Perniagaan Jahabersa, 2000), p3.

Islām is a religion of peace, yet it has become a subject of a great deal of misunderstanding and misinterpretation by many non-Muslims. It is not uncommon to see this religion being portrayed mostly in the West, as an enemy of modern good values such as democracy, liberty and tolerance. Islām gets a great deal of association with violence. In a *Newsweek* article “*The Age of Muslim Wars*” Professor Samuel Huntington made the following statement:

Contemporary global politics is the age of Muslim wars. Muslims fight each other and fight non-Muslims far more often than do peoples of other civilizations. Muslim wars have replaced the cold war as the principal form of international conflict. These wars include wars of terrorism, guerrilla wars, civil wars and interstate conflicts. These instances of Muslim violence could congeal into one major clash of civilizations between Islām and the West or between Islām and the rest. That, however, is not inevitable, and it is more likely that violence involving Muslims will remain dispersed, varied and frequent².

Below are also some verses from the Qur’ān that are generally misunderstood and misquoted mostly by non-Muslims to claim that the Qur’ān promotes violence and bloodshed and subsequently, leads to the misconception of war at the global level. In his book “*The World Comes Under Islām*”, Dr. Gangadhar Nanda says:

That jihād is the root of terrorism and terrorism is derived from terror, which is a religious part of jihād. jihād is always flanked by terrorism. The creation of terror in the minds of non-Muslims is an inevitable part of Islām. That jihād is the root of terrorism and terrorism is derived from terror, which is a religious part of jihād. Jihād is always flanked by terrorism. The creation of terror in the minds of non-Muslims is an inevitable part of Islām. Terror precautions death and causes half death. The fearful and cruel appearance of a combatant Muslim and his merciless slaughtering mentality in an Islāmic majority areas terrify the people who immediately start to flee. The Prophet himself has quoted in the order of Allah: “*I will throw fear in the heart of those who disbelieve. Then smite their necks and smite off each of their fingers*” (al-Anfāl: 12)³.

This *āyah* is about the battle of Badr and the participation of Allah’s (swt) angels in it. In this context, Sayyid Quṭb says:

² Huntington, Samuel. “The Age of Muslim Wars”, *Newsweek*. January 29 – 3rd February, 2002, p.8.

³ Nanda, Gangadhar. *The World Comes Under Islam: Transformation of Civilization* (Delhi: Kaveri Books, 2006), p.25.

This is indeed the greatest aspect of this whole battle. It is the fact that Allah Almighty was with the angels in this battle and the angels took part in it alongside the Muslim army. We must not lose sight of the importance of this fact by trying to find out how the angels took part, how many enemy soldiers did they kill? Or how they killed them? The great fact is that when Muslim community takes action to establish Allah's faith in the land, their action is valued so highly as to deserve Allah's presence with the angels in battle and the angels' participation in it. We cannot fathom how they participated in the Muslim victory of Badr except in as far as the fact stated in the Qur'ān. The Lord inspired them saying that He was with them and commanded them to encourage the believers. They complied because they always do what they are commanded. We, however, do not know how they fulfilled the task. Allah also ordered them to strike the unbelievers over their necks and strike off their fingertips. So they did all this, but in a fashion unknown to us. Knowledge of all this is merely a detail of knowing the nature of the angels, but we know this nature only what Allah has chosen to tell us. Furthermore, Allah promised to strike terror in the hearts of the unbelievers and this was certainly the case because Allah always fulfils His promises. However, we do not know how this was done. It is Allah who is Creator and He knows His creation. Indeed, Allah may cause a split between a person and his heart and He is closer to any person than his own jugular vein.⁴

The above *āyah* reminds Muslims to be firm against the enemy of Islām as Allah (swt) will throw terror into the hearts of those who have disbelieved. This *āyah* does not mean in any way that Muslims should take arms and go around the world killing any infidels that they find and strike them over their necks, and smite over all their fingers.

In another *āyah*, Allah (swt) say, *"Kill them whenever you confront them and drive them out from where they drove you out. (For though killing is sinful) wrongful persecution is even worse than killing. Do not fight against them near the Holy Mosque unless they fight against you: but if they fight against you kill them. for that is the reward of such unbelievers."* (al-Baqara: 191).

⁴ Quṭb, Sayyid, *Fī Zilāl al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Dār al-Shurūq, Vol.7, 1399/1979), p.80.

Regarding this *āyah*, Ibn Kathīr says, “*Your energy should be spent on fighting them, just as their energy is spent on fighting you, and on expelling them from the areas from which they have expelled you as a law of equality in punishment*”.⁵

From the above *āyah*, it is clear that Islām does not allow its followers to kill any innocent soul. But when the enemies of Islām attack Muslims and drive them out of their homeland, Muslims must confront them and this becomes a legitimate war in order to eliminate such oppression. However, if the enemies of Islām do not impose any threat and stop their hostilities, it is then forbidden to fight them. Therefore, the fact remains that Islām is a religion of peace, justice, and equality. It teaches peace-building values and good characters. At the same time, Islām sets down clear guidelines as to when war is ethically right, and clear guidelines as to how such war should be conducted.

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Our world today is full of wars, violence and terrorism as people clash with each other for various reasons. Islām is a religion of peace that aims to establish justice, equality and harmony among human beings, and hence it emphasizes on the need to work out the causes of wars, violence and injustice and take the appropriate steps to eliminate them.

But nowadays, we can see that Islām is being associated with violence in the minds of many people, Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Terms such as Muslim terrorists, Islāmic terrorism, and Islāmic terror are mainly used frequently by the Western media against Islām and Muslims. Such phrases have created a negative image and planted in the minds of many people that Islām is a violent religion.

⁵ Ibn Kathīr, ‘Imāduddīn Abū al-Fidā Ismā‘īl bin ‘Umar, *Tafsīr al-Qur‘ān al-‘Azīm* (Riyadh: Dārussalām Publishers & Distributors, Vol.1. 1st ed., 2000), p.527.

Contrary to this negative perception, the Qur'ān gives proper solutions to human conflicts and promotes peace. The Qur'ān says, *“But if the enemy inclines towards peace, do thou (also) incline towards peace, and trust in Allah; for He is the One that heareth and knoweth.”* (al-Anfāl: 61).

Therefore, the central point of this research is to give a clear explanation about the position of war and peace in the Qur'ān.

1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. Is Islām a religion of war or a religion of peace, justice and tolerance?
2. What are the principles of war and peace in the Qur'ānic context?
3. Is the Qur'ānic approach to conflict resolution relevant and universal in nature?
4. What are the contrasting Islāmic and Western approaches toward war and peace?
5. What are the most important Islāmic resources for peace building and what are the Islāmic approaches to reconciliation and coexistence?

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study attempts to achieve the following objectives :

1. To maintain that Islām is not a religion of war and violence as some may assume, but a religion of high morality of which justice, equality, and peace-building values constitute its basis.
2. To apply a comprehensive explanation about the principles and the fundamental rules of war and peace in the Qur'ān.

3. To analyse that the Qur'ānic approach to conflict resolution is universal and relevant to any time and space.
4. To distinguish between the Islāmic and Western approaches towards war and peace.
5. To identify the Islāmic perspective on war and peace in a world of collapsing boundaries and full of oppression, violence and aggressions, mainly against Muslims.

1.4 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

The concept of jihād has, at times, been abused by individuals or groups. Jihād is now being projected by the Western media, scholars and analysts as the source of terrorism. They, day and night, portrayed Muslims the world over as terrorists. This study points a way out of this mess. It is unfortunate that today Islām and Muslims have become the primary targets of negative portrayal mainly in the Western media. Islām is seen by many people as a religion of violence, that jihād is an expansion of the political domain of Islām through territorial conquest and that the early Muslims were concerned with material gain in their wars rather than the spread of Islām.

It seems there is a major lack of academic debate on how to present this message to non-Muslims through European languages, mainly English. Most of the works that discuss the fundamental issues of war and peace by learned Muslim scholars are mainly written in Arabic, which gives limited access to non-Muslims to comprehend. Consequently, Islām still bears the stigma in the West as a religion of violent fanatics, bent on converting others at all costs.

The Qur'ān does not instruct by any means the Islāmic nations to wage perpetual war against those nations of the world that are not included under the

sovereignty and jurisdiction of the Islāmic state. Nor does it order Muslims to fight and kill all non-Muslims throughout the world. The Qur'ān rather encourages Muslims to be at peace among themselves and with others.

This research may contribute to the English literature on war and peace. The world is indeed in an urgent need of understanding the message of Islām concerning war and peace.

1.5. LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this literature review is to show the path of prior research and how a current research is linked to it. It is also to learn from others and stimulate new theories and ideas. The topic chosen is “**The Concept of War and Peace in the Qur'ān: An Analytical Study**”. ‘Abdullah Yūsuf ‘Ali’s English translation of the Qur'ān will be used throughout this thesis unless otherwise noted. The researcher has identified some adequate literature that is related to the study, directly or indirectly.

Books on Peace and War in Islām

al-Salām wa al-Ḥarb fī al-Islām, by Moḥamed Farj. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr al-Arabi, 1960.

This book consists of three chapters. In the first chapter, the author discusses why Islām authorizes war, the concept of war in Islām, the difference between those who sacrifice in the path of Allah (swt) and those who do not want to fight. At the end of this chapter, the author concludes that Islām is a religion of peace. Chapter Two discusses how Muslim fighter prepare themselves, how they get enough weapons to carry out jihād, how they prepare for the battle, and get ready for what will happen

after the battle. Chapter Three discusses the reasons behind the victory of Muslims over their enemies, Muslim martyrs and the battles that Muslims won.

***War and Peace in the Law of Islām* by Mājid Khadduri, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1955.**

This book is one of the most famous contemporary books written on the subject of war and peace in Islām. The book consists of three major chapters. In Chapter One, the author discusses the fundamental concepts of Muslim law where he focuses on the theory of state, nature and sources of law and the Muslim law of nations. Chapter Two explains the law of war and jihād. In this chapter, the writer throws further lights on the doctrine of jihād, types of jihād, military methods, the initiation of war, land warfare, spoils of war and termination of fighting. In Chapter Three, the author discusses the law of peace, focusing on the issues of jurisdiction, foreigners in Muslim territories, Muslims in non-Muslim territories, status of the *Dhimmis*, treaties, commercial relations, arbitration, diplomacy, and neutrality.

It is the aim of the present study to reconstruct the classical legal theory of Islām, as well as the principles and the rules governing Islām's relations with non-Muslim countries.⁶

In general, the author has done a detailed study on the classical Islāmic doctrine pertaining the subject of war and peace and its implication in the contemporary world. His references include both the classical and contemporary Islāmic works on the subject of war and peace.

Towards an Islāmic Theory of International Relations: New Directions for

⁶ Khadduri, Mājid, *War and Peace in the Law of Islām* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1955), p. vii.

***Methodology and Thought* by ‘Abdul Ḥamīd. Abū Sulaymān, Herndon, VA:
International Institute of Islāmic Thought, 1987.**

This book, which was originally submitted as a doctoral dissertation, consists of four major chapters. In chapter one, the author discusses the conditions of the Muslim Ummah at the present time including its weakness, backwardness and its ongoing sufferings and internal conflicts. The author reminds readers that in the early Islāmic era, Muslims were in a leading position in world civilization and were masters of their own destiny. But at the present time, they have lost their civilization and are controlled and abused by foreign powers. The author starts to discuss the *wahy* (revelation) and Sunnah which constitute the first and second sources of the Sharī‘ah. He then talks about how Muslim jurists developed a methodology in dealing with the Sharī‘ah such as *qiyās* (anology), *ijma‘* (consensus), *usūl* (sources and methods of Muslim jurisprudence), and *taqlīd* (imitation). The author also discusses traditionalism and westernization.

In Chapter Two, the author analyses the classical theory of *siyar* (relations among nations) with regard to jihād. He deeply discusses terms of Dār al-Islām, Dār al-Ḥarb, and Dār al-‘Ahd. He also analyses other terms such as *Mushrik ūn*, *al-Dhimmah*, *al-Jizyah*, *Khalīfah*, *Amīr al Mu‘minīn*, *Imām* and *Sultān*. In discussing about the topic of the historical and psychological backgrounds of classical Muslim thought in international relations, the author cites the issue of *naskh* (abrogation), tolerance and unity of the Ummah, and the collapse of the classical theory. In Chapter Three, the author discusses the issue of methodology and its reformation focusing on the impact of *usūl* on Muslim thought. Chapter Four analyses the reconstruction of history from the legalistic to the political thought.

***al-Jihād fī al-Islām: Kayfa Naḡhamuhū wa Numārisuhū* by Al-Būti, Muḡammad Sa'id Ramadhan, Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 2005.**

In this book, the author discusses jihād as one of the most supreme principles in Islām and the most beloved deed to Allah (swt) and next to belief, is the shield that protects the nation of Islām from aggression. He reminds the reader that the enemies of Islām have exerted all possible efforts to distort its portrait and to transform its activism so as to make it explode in the heart of the Islāmic world so that its fragments would scatter in the form of disputes amongst its states, struggles between the peoples and their rulers and fights among sects, races and groups. Consequently, Muslims will assimilate the disunion, the division and the paralysis that the West plans to realize amidst them.

The author gives careful attention to the topic of this book and aims to purify jihād from whatever blemishes imperialism has been trying to attribute to it, and to solve the problems which appear to those who imagine illusively the existence of antithesis between jihād as a duty and the freedom of belief. He also refers the activities of Islāmic groups to the restrictions and rules of jihād. From a *fiqh* point of view, he manipulates all jurisprudential terms relevant to jihād such as charging with infidelity, disobeying the ruler, belligerency, wrongdoing, aggression, lurking, preparing *Imāmah* (House of Islām), contract of free non-Muslim subjects, *jizyah* (tribute) and killing the apostate.

***Critical Exposition of the Popular "Jihād"*, by Cheragh. A. Ali, Karachi: KarimSons, 1977.**

This is a classical Islāmic polemical work showing that all the wars of the Prophet (*saw*) were defensive, and that aggressive war or compulsory conversion is not

allowed in the Qur'ān. The book also addresses that jihād does not exegetically mean warfare.

***Jihād in Islām*, by S. Abul A'lā al-Maudūdi, Lahor: Islāmic Publication Ltd, 1980.**

This briefly written book is originally written in *Urdu* by one of the most influential Islāmic scholars of the twentieth century. It discusses how the word jihād has been misinterpreted by non-Muslims as an action of barbarism carried out by Muslims against anyone that does not share the same faith with them. The book also discusses the objectives of jihād and the need for it in our present time, so the Muslim Ummah will bring back Islāmic glory days. The author does not support the idea of dividing jihād into defensive and offensive modes and adds that this can only be applied by wars that are motivated by ethnicity and nationalism. Overall, the book presents jihād as the revolutionary struggle of Islām.

***Is Jihād a Just War? War, Peace and Human Rights under Islāmic and Public International Law* by Hilmi M. Zawati, New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2002**

Zawati offers a general comparison of the form of armed struggle called jihād with international law. His primary point is that jihād is not the aggressive religious war it is often purported to be; rather, it is a defensive war that meets the just-war criteria established in the United Nations Charter and other international laws of war. The most helpful aspect of Zawati's study are the correlations he draws between Islāmic international law and the actual text of the Qur'ān, the Treaty of Medina, and other primary Islāmic sources.

Zawati also demonstrates his ability to analyze both Western and Islāmic legal concepts and is able to distinguish between the finer points. These points include whether jihād is a defensive or offensive war or both. In this regard, the author emphasises that jihād is a defensive war and not an aggressive religious war as is often portrayed by non-Muslims. Zawati's bibliography consists of nearly 150 primary sources and about 300 hundred books, articles and official documents. The selection is very well balanced and he uses these sources judiciously. The work is an excellent piece of scholarship, which will remain a standard reference on the subject matter for many years to come.

***Jihād in Classical and Modern Islām*, by Peters Rudolph, New Jersey: Markus Wiener Publishers Princeton, 1996.**

This book contains six Islāmic texts, translated from Arabic and Turkish, and two articles on jihād. The first text consists of a number of sayings and deeds of the Prophet (*saw*) containing prescriptions for proper conduct during warfare. Together with the Qur'ān, they form the raw materials from which Islāmic law is elaborated, and in the texts on jihād included in this book, many *ahādith* (traditions of the Prophet (*saw*)) presented in this book are quoted or referred to. The second text, taken from *al-Muwatta'* Imām Mālik, consists of two passages containing sayings of the Prophet (*saw*) or his companions exhorting the Muslims to participate in jihād and expounding the ultimate happiness of the martyrs. This text is followed by an expose of the legal doctrine of Jihād taken from the legal book *Bidāyat al-Mujtahid wa-Nihāyat al-Muqtasid*, written by the famous philosopher, physician and judge Abū al-Walīd Muhammad ibn Muḥammad Ibn Rushd, known in the West as Averroes.

The fourth text, a passage from Ibn Taymiyya's *al-Siyāsah al-Shar'īyah fī Islāh al-Ra'i, wa al-Ra'īyah*, focuses on the legal, religious and moral aspects of jihād. It quotes a number of Qur'ānic verses and sayings of the Prophet (*saw*) on jihād, and deals with the meritoriousness of participating in it and with the definition of the enemy. The fifth brief text is about a *fatwa* (religious edict and legal opinion) that was issued by the highest religious authority in the Othman Empire on 11th November 1914 and accompanied the official declaration of war against the Allied Powers.

The last text that the author included in this book is a treatise on jihād in which the author, Sheikh Mahmūd Shaltūt argues for a modernist and peaceful interpretation of jihād.

The Shade of Swords: Jihād and the Conflict between Islām and Christianity, M.J. Akbar, London: Routledge, 2002.

This book discusses the origins and nature of both the battle and the battlefield. The first eight chapters explain the doctrinaire and the historical roots of the conflict between Islām and Christianity. The later chapters guide the reader through confrontations in the East in all their splendid variety, from Caucasus through Afghanistan. This book is related to this study as the first part of Chapter One of this book discusses jihād, war in Islām, and the success of Muslim army on the battlefield such as the Battle of Badr, in which the author mentions that the victory of Badr had inspired Muslim heroism beyond the bounds of reason. This book is treated as a secondary source.